

**Mega solar project installed on St. Paul's RiverCentre roof**

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✓ A sea of solar panels is being installed on the Saint Paul RiverCentre roof in downtown St. Paul, in what city officials are calling the "largest solar thermal project in the Midwest."

The joint project between Saint Paul RiverCentre and District Energy St. Paul is funded with a \$1 million federal stimulus grant from the U.S. Department of Energy, with matching funds from District Energy.

The project includes 144 solar thermal panels, covering roughly two-thirds the size of a football field, that will generate 1 megawatt of energy and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 900,000 pounds annually. The solar energy collected will be used to heat water, converting up to 80 percent of absorbed sunlight into usable thermal energy. The heated water will be used by Saint Paul RiverCentre and the downtown St. Paul area for space and hot water needs.

The nearly 1,000 kW system should be completed and operating in January; other big solar installations in Minnesota are Saint John's University in Collegeville and the Minneapolis Convention Center, which are each 600 kW systems.